



# United States Department of the Interior

## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

COOS BAY DISTRICT OFFICE

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5400/1792

Bear Track DMT

OR120-04-05

Cox Creek DMT EA

OR125-03-10

### DECISION DOCUMENTATION

for

Bear Track DMT Timber Sale

OR120-04-05

#### Background

The Bear Track DMT Timber Sale (OR120-04-05) is a portion of Alternative A of the Cox Creek DMT Environmental Assessment (EA) which concluded with a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) dated 11/21/03. The proposed density management thinning (DMT) activities for the Bear Track DMT Timber Sale are located in Section 31, T25S, R10W; Sections 4, 5, and 6, T26S, R10W; and Section 1, T26S, R11W; Willamette Meridian in Coos County.

The following table shows the relationship between the Bear Track DMT unit numbers and the EA unit numbers:

**Table 1** -Timber sale unit numbers with corresponding EA unit numbers

Bear Track DMT Unit Number	EA Unit Number
1	1A
2	1B, 5A, 5B, 6N, 6NS½, 8
2A	6HW
3	1C, 1D, 1M
4	9

The EA is tiered to the Coos Bay District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan, (RMP) as supplemented and amended (USDI 1995), which is in conformance with the Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement on Management of Habitat for the Late Successional and Old Growth Forest Related Species Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl and its Record of Decision (ROD), (Northwest Forest Plan), as supplemented and amended (USDA-USDI 1994).

Forest treatments would occur in Late-Successional Reserves, Riparian Reserves and Matrix land use allocations. Late Successional Reserve treatments are in compliance with the South Coast - Northern Klamath Late-Successional Reserve Assessment (LSRA), (USDA-USDI 1998). Riparian Reserve treatments are consistent with the Aquatic Conservation Strategy.

Informal consultation under Section 7(A)(4) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 [16 U.S.C. 1563 (a)(2) and (a)(4) as amended] was completed with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service, where it was determined that this action would not likely adversely affect listed species or critical habitat. The project area does not contain "Essential Fish Habitat", as defined in the Magnuson-Stevens Act. The proposed action would not contribute to the need to list any of the special status species. The estimated environmental effects contained in the EA are based on research, professional judgment, and the experience of the Interdisciplinary Team. No significant adverse impacts are expected on (1) Air Quality, (2) Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, (3) Cultural Resource Values, (4) Prime or Unique Farmland, (5) Flood Plains, (6) Native American Religious Concerns, (7) Hazardous Materials/Solid Waste, (8) Threatened or Endangered Species, (9) Water Quality, (10) Wetlands and Riparian Zones, (11) Wild and Scenic Rivers, (12) Wilderness Values or, (13) Noxious Weeds.

The general public was informed of the planned EA through a letter (2/13/03) to those on the Resource Area's mailing list (which included adjacent landowners and the public requesting scoping notice of timber sale EAs), and to those receiving the District's Planning Update (February, 2003). An announcement was also posted on the District's Internet site, <http://www.or.blm.gov/coosbay>. Three public responses to scoping were received. The public was informed of the EA and FONSI through a letter (11/21/03), through a published legal notice in The World newspaper (11/22/03), and through the District's Internet site. Four public responses were received. Public comments about the EA fell into three categories: 1) issues addressed and covered by the Final - Coos Bay District Proposed Resource Management Plan (FRMP, USDI 1994), 2) issues outside the scope of the site specific EA, and 3) issues already covered by the EA.

## Decision

I have decided to offer for sale portions of the Cox Creek EA units, as shown in Table 1 consistent with Alternative A, which will now be referred to as the Bear Track DMT Timber Sale (OR120-04-05). This action consists of density management treatment of five (5) units in Late-Successional Reserve, Riparian Reserve and Matrix land use allocations totaling 463 acres, road renovation of 13.2 miles, new road construction of 2.0 miles, road decommissioning of 3.9 miles, and creation of approximately 632 snags and 1377 pieces of down wood. Stand treatments will provide approximately 8,841 thousand board feet of timber which are trees cut by the treatment but surplus to habitat needs.

## Rational For Decision

The following criteria were used in the selection of this action.

1. Enhancement of individual tree growth, improving stand structural diversity and managing stand processes to meet Late Successional Reserve and Aquatic Conservation Strategy objectives.
2. Cost effectiveness of density management treatments and management of risk.

The newly constructed roads providing access for this sale have been kept to the minimum necessary for application of the treatments, are routed through unsuitable habitat for special status species, and have been designed to minimize adverse impacts (natural surfaced, constructed on stable ridges and benches, and decommissioned by the methods described in EA Appendix 4) (RMP-ROD p19-20). There is a risk that a few large snags near the project areas would be felled for safety reasons but the loss would be mitigated by the creation of similarly sized snags in the reserve. The potential benefits of stand treatments exceed the costs of habitat impairment (RMP-ROD p19-20).

The No Action alternative does not promote accelerated growth rates of residual trees, does not promote development of the understory, does not promote species diversity and structure, does not reduce open road densities and would fail to meet the purpose and need.

In accordance with Forest Management Regulations at 43 CFR 5003.2, the decision for this DMT sale will not become effective until the Notice of Sale is published in a newspaper of general circulation in the area where the lands affected by decision are located. For this project, the Notice of Sale will be published in The World newspaper.

**Decision recommended by:**

Natural Resource Staff Administrator

Kathy Wall *Kathy Wall* Date: *07/19/2004*

Natural Resource Staff Administrator

For Ralph Thomas *Stafford Owen (Acting)* Date: *07/20/2004*

**Decision approved by:**

Umpqua Field Office Manager

For M. Elaine Raper *Ralph Thomas (Acting)* Date: *07/20/2004*